

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 IO-13 CU-04 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05

/111 W

-----076990 011844Z /43

P R 011635Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8722

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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DAKAR ALSO FOR USDAO

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT ML

SUBJECT: ARREST OF THREE MILITARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

REF: BAMA KO 0900

1. PRESIDENT MOUSSA TRAORE ANNOUNCED ON RADIO MALI AT 2015 HOURS FEBRUARY 28 THE ARREST OF MINISTER OF DEFENSE KISSIMA DOUKARA, MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS KARIN DEMBELE, AND DIRECTOR OF SECURITY SERVICES TIECORO BAGAYOKO, ALL LT. COLONELS AND MEMBERS OF MALI'S RULING MILITARY COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION (CMLN). THE THREE WERE ACCUSDD OF HIGH TREASON, DISSEMINATION OF
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STATE SECRETS, DECEIT, AND SPECULATION.

PRESIDENT SPECIFICALLY CHARGED MINISTER OF DEFENSE WITH FRAUDULENT PRACTICE IN ADMINISTRATION OF DROUGHT RELIEF, CHARACTERIZED DIRECTOR OF SECURITY SERVICES AS THE PERSONIFICATION OF TERROR AND CALUMNY, AND NOTED THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT'S EXTENSIVE REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS. THE PRESIDENT CONCLUDED THAT, IN MAKING THESE

ARRESTS, MALIAN ARMY HAD AGAIN INTERVENED TO PROTECT HIGHER INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE.

2. ARRESTS FOLLOWED HOLIDAY WEEKEND (BAPTISM OF MOHAMED) IN WHICH TENSIONS IN CMLN CAME TO PEAK. ON FEBRUARY 25 DOUKARA AND BAGAYOKO ACCOMPANIED THE PRESIDENT, JUST RETURNED FROM A TWO-WEEK RETREAT, IN WELCOMING VISITING MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH. APPARENT SOLIDARITY, HOWEVER, MERELY CLOAKED BACKGROUND MACHINATIONS AS FACTIONS IN CMLN SOUGHT DOMINANCE. IT APPEARS THAT DOUKARA-BAGAYOKO FACTION MAY HAVE PLANNED COUP FOR NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 28. PRESIDENT PRE-EMPTED PLANS BY CALLING MEETING OF CMLN AND MILITARY HIGH COMMAND MORNING OF FEBRUARY 28 AND ORDERING GENERAL ALERT THAT AFTERNOON. ARMORED CARRIERS SET UP DEFENSE OF CMLN HEADQUARTERS SAME AFTERNOON.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ARRESTS RESULTED IN RAUCOUS DEMONSTRATION DOWNTOWN NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 28. UNRULY CROWDS ATTACKED SECURITY SERVICES HEADQUARTERS AND, AT KEY INTERSECTIONS, STONED PASSING CARS INCLUDING CAR OF DCM'S SECRETARY. REGULAR POLICE DISAPPEARED BUT ARMY MOVED INTO DOWNTOWN AREA BY 2300 HOURS. IN OUTLYING AREAS, TRUCKERS AND TAXIMEN, WHO WERE USUALLY HARASSED BY POLICE UNDER LT COLONEL BAGAYOKG'S DIRECTION, LED

DEMONSTRATION SHOUTING, "DOWN WITH TIECORO."
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4. THIS MORNING, MARCH 1, CITY IS GENERALLY CALM. ONLY OBSERVABLE MILITARY PRESENCE IS IN DOWNTOWN AREA AROUND SECURITY SERVICES HEADQUARTERS. STUDENTS FROM ACROSS RIVER IN BADALABOUGOU HAVE MARCHED IN MASS TO CMLN HEADQUARTERS TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT'S ACTION. RADIO MALI CARRIED LIVE COVERAGE OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATION INCLUDING FIERY SPEECH BY MINISTER OF EDUCATION TOUSSOUF TRAORE. RADIO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT PRESIDENT TRAORE REVEALED TO CMLN THE DISCOVERY OF MINISTER OF TRANSPORT'S PERSONAL SUITCASE CONTAINING 24 MILLION MALIAN FRANCS (\$50,000).

5. POPULACE SEEMS DELIGHTED WITH NEWS OF ARRESTS, ESPECIALLY THAT OF DIRECTOR OF SECURITY SERVICES. IT IS NOT YET KNOWN WHAT SUPPORT PRESIDENT TRAORE HAS AMONG MILITARY UNITS. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO EVIDENCE OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN BAMA KO, AND LOCAL CAMPS APPEAR CALM. IT MAY BE THAT PRESIDENT TRAORE HAS SUCCESSFULLY PURGED THE MILITARY COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION.

6. THE ADRESTD MAY HAVE A FAVORABLE DOMESTIC IMPACT, IF THEY RESULT IN THE MATERIALIZATION OF SCHEDULED

MOVES TOWARD A RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE, BUT WE DO NOT
EXPECT THEM TO CHANGE BASIC U.S.-MALIAN RELATIONS.
UNDER PRESIDENT TRAORE'S CONTINUING LEADERSHIP, THE
MILITARY COMMITTEE SHOULD MAINTAIN PRESENT POLICIES.
BYRNE

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